

MRS. HALL KNEW RECTOR LOVED SINGER, SAYS MRS. MILLS' SISTER

Murdered Woman Feared Widow, Probers Are Told

By a Staff Correspondent

SOMERVILLE, N. J., Aug. 10.—Mrs. Frances Stevens Hall, out on bail for the murder of her unfaithful husband and his soulmate, Mrs. Eleanor Mills, knew of the fiery passion that flamed between them, knew that she had lost the love of her husband.

This was the startling assertion today by Mrs. Marie Lee of 580 West 38th St., Paterson, N. J., who will be questioned by state police at their headquarters here. Mrs. Lee, sister of the slain choir singer, lived at the Mills home for two years.

Contradicts Widow

She left there six months before the bodies were found beneath the crabapple tree on the Phillips farm, the tragic aftermath of a love tryst held on September 14, 1922.

"The story is one of the most important developments in the case," said Inspector John Underwood of the Jersey City police, who is aiding in the investigation. "Mrs. Hall always has denied she knew her husband's love had cooled and that he had found another more sympathetic comrade."

Predicted Tragedy

"Mrs. Mills told me of her affair," Mrs. Lee told reporters. "I tried to persuade her to drop the friendship, but it was too deep and sincere. My sister told me she knew Mrs. Hall was aware of the devotion and that she (my sister) knew it would end tragically."

"My sister, Mrs. Mills, told me that Hall servants were talking a lot about the affair," she continued. "She said that when she underwent an operation at Middlesex Hospital in New Brunswick the Halls came to see her. As they stood at her bedside Dr. Hall said:—

"Eleanor, if anything happens to you, I'll kill myself."

"After this, Mrs. Hall left the room. Dr. Hall wrote a love poem

Grilling Wilts Jimmy Mills



JAMES MILLS, husband of Mrs. Eleanor Mills, the slain choir singer, was questioned five hours by officials on his part in the Hall-Mills case. He is shown emerging from the grilling with Major Mark O. Kimberling (left) of the state police. Mills was tired and worn by the hours of questioning. (Photo Graphic.)

Few Involved in Murder Of Couple, Says Reporter

Milton V. O'Connell, formerly of the Sun and Herald-Tribune, reporter longest assigned to the Hall-Mills murder, today continues a series of articles analyzing the crime for GRAPHIC readers. Mr. O'Connell spent four months at the scene of the double slaying, during which time he made a thorough study of the mystery.

The second of his articles follows:—

By MILTON V. O'CONNELL

There are but a handful of persons who might have an intimate knowledge of this terrible crime. They are persons who through their relationship to one or the other of the slain parties might have a MOTIVE or reason.

These persons, liable to investigation are:—

FRANCES STEVENS HALL, widow of the slain rector, and now charged with murder.

"WILLIE" STEVENS, eccentric brother of Mrs. Hall.

HENRY STEVENS, another brother of Mrs. Hall, crack shot, resident of New Jersey, and very close to his sister.

RALPH GORSLINE, member of the choir, who was acquainted with Mrs. Mills.

JAMES MILLS, janitor-sexton of Dr. Hall's church, and cognizant of the friendship between Dr. Hall and Mrs. Mills, but steadfastly be-

lieving no intimacy existed between them.

"PARTY OR PARTIES UNKNOWN," the favorite designation by police of the criminal they have been unable to catch, possibly engaged to do the killing, and therefore accomplices and accessories to the murders.

There the case stands today. Who if any of those mentioned above had the best MOTIVE?

Who would be able and likely to CUT MRS. MILLS' THROAT, arrange the bodies (the minister's

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Hint Rival Fired Plant Causing \$50,000 Blast; Fireworks Thrill Crowd

Police today were investigating a \$50,000 explosion which wrecked the plant of the New York Fireworks Company in the New Durham section of North Bergen, N. J., and caused a two-hour pyrotechnic display.

Former Hall Maid Did Not Conceal Evidence, She Says

By LEO CASEY

GRAPHIC Staff Correspondent

NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J., Aug.

10.—One of the chief reasons advanced for the second probe into the Hall-Mills murder mystery and the arrest for murder of Mrs. Frances Stevens Hall, widow of the slain dominie, was dissipated today by the statement of Louise Geist, former maid in the Hall household.

Miss Geist, through a GRAPHIC correspondent, in her home at Davidson's Mill, emphatically denied that the presence of Mrs. Maria Gildea as cook in the clergyman's home had been concealed from the authorities.

The instigators of the present investigation into the sensational slaying of Dr. Hall and Mrs. Mills, his inamorata, made much of the facts that the 1922 investigators did not know of Mrs. Gildea's employment as the Hall cook. The innuendo, if not the bald statement, was that Mrs. Hall and her relatives purposely hid the facts.

"Did they try to hide it—that Mrs. Gildea was the cook?"

"Certainly not," was Miss Geist's answer to the reporter's question.

"Why, on the first day that I went to the Prosecutor's office and was questioned the officials asked me who was cook in the house. I told them it was Maria Gildea. They asked me if I thought she knew anything."

"I said no. They asked if I thought she was worth questioning. I said no."

Miss Geist was then asked if she could name any individual who knew that Mrs. Gildea was employed by the Halls at the time of the murder. She replied:—

"Why, Ferd David knew about her."

David was county detective for Middlesex county at the time of the

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Louis Nastasi, son of the owner of the plant, Carmelo Nastasi, declared the "jealousy" of "rival companies" might have had something to do with the origin of the blast. He intimated that the catastrophe might have been incendiary.

Another theory is that the spontaneous combustion of oil and rags on the floor of one of the twelve sheds of the plant caused the explosion.

Shed Demolished

The largest of the twelve sheds was completely demolished by the blast and the remaining structures took fire, causing a sudden ascension of all kinds of fireworks which, for a few minutes, caused many persons in the vicinity to believe a big powder plant had caught fire. However, when the extent of the blast was realized, thousands flocked to the scene to view the free Fourth of July display. None was hurt.

Fire apparatus from North Bergen and adjoining towns responded with the first call for aid, but it was some time before they could reach the scene, for their path on Hudson Boulevard was blocked by hundreds of automobiles driven by inquisitive motorists who had stopped to watch the fireworks.

A water shortage faced the firefighters when they finally started work to stem the flames and they were forced to bring water from a ditch near Cromwell Creek. After two hours, the blaze was under control.

Luckily, a large storehouse about 100 yards from the razed structures was not damaged. It contained nearly a ton of high explosives which are highly combustible.

Two men were reported missing after the fire had been put out, one being Harry Compson, 42, the night watchman. Both turned up later, however. Nastasi, the owner of the plant, estimated the damage at more than \$50,000.

WEDDING ANNOUNCED

WASHINGTON, Aug. 10.—Mrs. H. R. Scudder of Edgemoor has issued cards announcing the marriage of her daughter, Sarah Rodman Scutter, to Lieut. Frank John Clark, U. S. A.

Butler Assails Bishop For His Attack on Smith

Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University, joins with a host of other prominent men of varying shades of political opinion in denouncing the attack on Gov. Smith by Bishop Leonard of Buffalo.

The letter had asserted that "no governor can kiss the papal ring and get within gunshot of the White House."

"Here is a man," says Dr. Butler, "holding high office in a Christian church and proclaiming himself to be 100 per cent. Anglo-Saxon, who in this carefully studied public utterance contradicts nearly all of Christ's precepts of conduct, and proceeds to declare open war on

that fundamental principle of American life which establishes absolute freedom of religious belief and religious worship and the complete separation of church and state."

As a closing shot, Dr. Butler declared: "This shows the intemperance of some of those who advocate temperance."



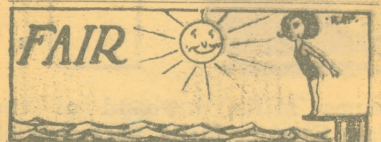
President Butler

DEAD AT ASBURY PARK

ASBURY PARK, N. J., Aug. 10.—Edward M. Hope, a pioneer electrical contractor of the North Jersey shore, died suddenly from heart disease at the age of 62.

THE WEATHER

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 1926.



U. S. WEATHER FORECAST

LOCAL.—Fair, with slowly rising temperature today; tomorrow showers; gentle variable winds, becoming southeast.

EASTERN NEW YORK.—Fair, with slowly rising temperature today; tomorrow showers; gentle variable winds, becoming southeast.